

## Small Business Act Review: Chamber survey corroborates focus on stronger governance

EUROCHAMBRES today endorsed the focus on governance in the Commission's newly adopted Communication on the Review of the Small Business Act (SBA).

The review also emphasises the three priority areas of the Council's 2008 SBA Action Plan, as repeatedly advocated by EUROCHAMBRES – i.e. improving access to finance, enhancing market access and smart regulation.

A second EUROCHAMBRES implementation survey reveals that, two years after its adoption by member states, the SBA has had a limited impact on European small and medium enterprises (SMEs), with little significant progress on the three Council priorities:

- **Access to finance:** While facilitating SME access to finance has been one of the priorities for a majority of EU countries since the financial crisis of late 2008, the measures have largely proved imperceptible to businesses on the ground.
- **Access to market:** There is still considerable scope to improve SMEs' access to the single market and remove remaining barriers. For instance, the Points of Single Contact for the Services Directive are still not established and fully operational in nearly half of the member states.
- **Smart regulation:** Efforts have been made in 2010 to improve the regulatory environment for businesses, but much remains to be done. Only half of the national impact assessment systems include an SME test, and the implementation of the "only once" principle is unsatisfactory in many EU countries.

EUROCHAMBRES' Secretary General Arnaldo Abruzzini said: *"The results of our survey confirm that the Commission is correct to focus on the governance of the SBA in order to address the disappointing shortfalls in implementation."*

EUROCHAMBRES hopes that a more robust system to monitor member states' actions, as well as peer reviews and exchanges of good practices will prompt member states to redouble their efforts to ensure more favourable conditions for SMEs.

*"We now look to member states to endorse the review and confirm their readiness to deliver at the next Competitiveness Council,"* concluded Mr Abruzzini.

**The full EUROCHAMBRES survey on the implementation of the Small Business Act can be downloaded from [www.eurochambres.eu/Content/Default.asp?PageID=1&DocID=3053](http://www.eurochambres.eu/Content/Default.asp?PageID=1&DocID=3053)**

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Further information: Mrs Typhaine Beaupérin-Holvoet, Tel. +32 2 282 08 80, [beauperin@eurochambres.eu](mailto:beauperin@eurochambres.eu)  
Press contact: Ms Guendalina Cominotti, Tel. +32 2 282 08 66, [cominotti@eurochambres.eu](mailto:cominotti@eurochambres.eu)  
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